

**From:** [southhubsecurity@googlegroups.com](mailto:southhubsecurity@googlegroups.com) on behalf of [karl.gustafson.swede](mailto:karl.gustafson.swede)  
**To:** [Social Cybersecurity](#)  
**Subject:** [Non-DoD Source] [South Hub Security] Notes: Oct 4 South Big Data Hub "Social Cybersecurity WG"  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 9, 2018 4:28:18 PM

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## 2018-10-04 Social Cybersecurity Working Group

You asked your questions and Rebecca Goolsby's answers can be found below in the notes section.

Next meeting: Thursday, Nov 1, 11am ET    Presenter: Kate Starbird (U WA)

### [Running meeting notes](#)

WG Chair, Dr. Nitin Agarwal, University of Arkansas    [agarwal.nitin@gmail.com](mailto:agarwal.nitin@gmail.com)  
co-Chair, Dr. Kathleen Carley, Carnegie-Mellon University  
[kathleen.carley@cs.cmu.edu](mailto:kathleen.carley@cs.cmu.edu)  
co-Chair, Dr. Lea Shanley, South Big Data Hub, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill    [lshanley@renci.org](mailto:lshanley@renci.org)

WG Description: Social media and digital communication tools have largely been considered as positive vehicles of change. However, state/non-state actors, extremists, and terrorists have quite effectively harnessed modern communication platforms to influence mass thinking, manipulate discourse and fabricate perceptions. To address the problems that affect our cognitive security, we envision to create a collaborative platform bringing data scientists, social scientists, cognitive scientists, psychologists, security experts, among others to share, exchange, learn, and develop new concepts, ideas, and principles. Outcomes of the working group will include a repository of resources, policy briefs laying out the research agenda, and viable paths to advance our security apparatus to spark innovation among researchers. Through the social cybersecurity working group, we intend to build an interdisciplinary community to advance the understanding and the current state of research in the social cyber security domain.

Attendees: 15

Ben	Towne	<a href="mailto:wbt@alumni.cmu.edu">wbt@alumni.cmu.edu</a>	CMU
Bill	Shi	<a href="mailto:bill10@email.unc.edu">bill10@email.unc.edu</a>	UNC
Christina	Bouwens	<a href="mailto:Christina.Bouwens@ucf.edu">Christina.Bouwens@ucf.edu</a>	U Central FL
Harve	Tannenbaum	<a href="mailto:HarveTannenbaum@centralpenn.edu">HarveTannenbaum@centralpenn.edu</a>	Central Penn College

Huan	Liu	<a href="mailto:huanliu@asu.edu">huanliu@asu.edu</a>	Arizona State
John	Gray	<a href="mailto:john@mentionmapp.com">john@mentionmapp.com</a>	Mentionmapp Analytics
Karl	Gustafson	<a href="mailto:kgustafs@renci.org">kgustafs@renci.org</a>	South BD Hub
Kathleen	Carley	<a href="mailto:kathleen.carley@cs.cmu.edu">kathleen.carley@cs.cmu.edu</a>	CMU
Mariofanna	Milanova	<a href="mailto:mgmilanova@ualr.edu">mgmilanova@ualr.edu</a>	U Arkansas
Michael	Gresalfi	<a href="mailto:mjgresalfi@gmail.com">mjgresalfi@gmail.com</a>	DHS-FEMA
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Samira	Shaikh	<a href="mailto:sshaikh2@uncc.edu">sshaikh2@uncc.edu</a>	UNC-Charlotte
Sun-Ki	Chai	<a href="mailto:sunki@hawaii.edu">sunki@hawaii.edu</a>	U Hawaii

#### Oct 4 Agenda:

11:00 AM Welcome and Introductions (Chair: Nitin Agarwal) (5 mins)

11:05 AM Working Group Business (25 mins)

- Send material for site - expect to go live in early December
- Progress on special issue

11:30 AM Question and Answer Session (25 mins)

- Guest: Rebecca Goolsby (Office of Naval Research): *Ask Me Anything*
- Q&A and Group Discussion

11:55 AM Announcements and Adjourn (5 mins)

- November 1: Kate Starbird (U Washington)

#### Action items:

1. Action: WG participants please send Kathleen Carley your pointers to website resources: [kathleen.carley@cs.cmu.edu](mailto:kathleen.carley@cs.cmu.edu)
2. Action: Kathleen to share South BD Hub website link with WG

#### Notes:

- **WG business**
  - Website in development for WG
    - Action: Please send the following to [kathleen.carley@cs.cmu.edu](mailto:kathleen.carley@cs.cmu.edu)
      - Pointers to:
        - papers

- good data
  - supporting tools
  - publications
    - Example: Wall Street Journal article: Sept 19 "How Hackers Talk Their Way Into Getting Company Secrets" by McMillan
  - fact checking
  - training resources
    - Action: Kathleen to share South BD Hub website link with WG
  - Spoke proposals in 2019: In anticipation of the call for proposals consider being an applicant; could be a joint proposal
  - Special issue: wrapping up with Nitin's contribution
- **Presenter: "Ask Me Anything" Q&A session with special guest: Rebecca Goolsby (Office of Naval Research) Email: [rebecca.goolsby@navy.mil](mailto:rebecca.goolsby@navy.mil)**
  - **Question 1: If you had a magic wand, what is the problem or challenge you would most like to solve?**
    - Answer 1: I'd like to solve the challenge of identifying malefactors on Twitter; I'd like to figure out how to deal with dynamics that influence crowds.
  - **Question 2: How do you characterize the difference between Russian behaviors/activities and the Chinese on Twitter and Reddit?**
    - Answer 2: We can id both but easier to distinguish Twitter; Choose a discourse and study it over time; Asian topics required finesse
      - Hard problems needing work:
        - Flame wars promoting division
        - How to manage conflict
        - ID source of infection
        - Help people become resilient; social problem
  - **Question 3: What are the hard problems you would encourage the research community like ours to work on?**
    - Answer 3: Flame wars promoting division, How to manage conflict, ID source of infection, Help people become resilient (social problem)
  - **Question 4: What is the scope of the research of interest to ONR (Social Networks and Computational Social Science/Human and Bioengineered Systems Program)?**
    - Answer 4: Please contact me directly regarding my program: [rebecca.goolsby@navy.mil](mailto:rebecca.goolsby@navy.mil)
  - **Question 5: Computational solutions do not seem to be adequate to defeating disinformation. They are certainly necessary. How can we bring other avenues such as education and awareness, and policy based efforts into the solution framework?**
    - Answer 5: I would like to see universities work with local groups

and politicians, school boards, etc.; anything we could do to start a good discussion about difference and debate and about public debate; instill understanding about things like "outrage porn" ; South Hub could provide key materials on their website, e.g., Ben Nimmo ([Digital Forensics Research Lab](#)) "[To Spot a Bot](#)"

■ **Question 6: What role do you see of human-computer symbiosis type of solutions to combat disinformation campaigns?**

- Answer 6: Disinformation is a symptom that has always been out there. Misinformation is willingly buying disinformation and pushing it on. People already have the ability to use [Snopes](#) or Google to check things out. They have to get into the HABIT space of checking things out and correcting misinformation when we recognize it.

■ **Question 7: Recently a lot of writers have started saying that social media doesn't HAVE problems, it IS The problem. How do you see scholar as able to push social media companies into taking responsibility (if you think that's necessary)?**

- Answer 7: Not sure how to push social media companies to be responsible. Public shame helps. Publish, publish, publish!

■ **Question 8: What do you see as the appropriate balance between free speech and controlling what we see as misinformation (in our scientific worldview where objective truth still exists)? (or between free speech and inflammatory language that is either true or making no claim to truth)?**

- Answer 8: The appropriate balance will forever be treading the line. We have to figure out how to evaluate the discourse. The problem is artificial actors who are disingenuous who are pushing people into emotional corners and exploiting their low information to create hysterical crowds. We have to figure out how to discover the mal-actors. E.g. Israel/Palestinian friendship and the asking of questions to create a false conflict. We need to create new norms and values in social media and promote good hygiene with models of good behavior. Demand from social media companies the ability to police our own feeds.

■ **Question 9: As academics, we do not have often get access to “real” data. Our research and conclusions are therefore limited to the tiny data sample made available to us. How should we address this problem?**

- Answer 9: Academics need to press their congressmen to unlock the data for research. Twitter rules blocking access to data need to be destroyed. The data needs to be accessible. Start talking about this in journals and blogs. Create social media where those who participate on it are not the product. For example, a paid version of

FB or Twitter. These could knock out the egregious botnets immediately. Paying customers are empowered against the platform. Empowering the customer can make this space better.

- **Question 10: Are there ways to measure impact of disinformation campaigns? What could be some countermeasures to diffuse disinformation campaigns?**

- Answer 10: First you have to define what a disinformation campaign is. You have to scope it. Disinformation is not the question. We need to talk about INFLUENCE CAMPAIGNS. May involve disinformation but this is only one tool used to influence a social cyber group. The target is a group but then larger society as a whole. There are simple metrics for Twitter that can help us get at scope. Measuring this on FB is harder because of data access issues.

- **Question 11: What could be some countermeasures to diffuse disinformation campaigns?**

- Answer 11: This is an area of open science. We are dealing here with people who willingly accept disinformation. We need to work on a different level other than just the computing science level.

- **Question 12: What is missing in current collaborations between social scientists and computer scientists on this issue? Is there a gap than can be bridged?**

- Answer 12: In my program I really want to see the social scientists in charge of the computational modeling. Diversity on research team is also important. Disciplines need to be open and willing to share power. A diverse group that truly collaborates can make breakthroughs. Computer scientists create tools that social scientists can then use. Social scientists need the tools to be able to see the data and work with the data so they can define the problem. When they can define the problem the computer scientists can come up with new tools and ways to look at the data that will help elucidate the problem better. Everyone at the table is on an equal playing ground.

- **Question 13: How do we do research as academics that stays apolitical and does not affect funding?**

- Answer 13: Get funding from a variety of sources (HP, MS, SSRC). It is a challenge to stay apolitical. The key is to look abroad at issues that don't affect the US, e.g., The UK and Brexit. The international playing field is full of interesting issues to research, e.g., Swedish elections, Saudis and CAN, Brazilian presidential campaign; there are also positive campaigns that contribute to social good; there is a brighter side to all this.

- **Question 14: As a researcher it is becoming more challenging to get**

**social media data for experiments; platforms keep changing policies.  
Makes writing a proposal a challenge. Any encouragement?**

- Talk to sponsor on regular basis; see what they say; grants are grants; can be changed as needed; go boldly!; key is a team that is flexible and adaptive; research is a creative endeavor; chase research where it goes.

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